

D 5464

ALLEGED CHEQUE FRAUD

A. C. Mack Again Appears at H.M. Court

STORY OF \$1,000,000 BANK ACCOUNT

Another full day was devoted yesterday by Mr. C. H. Haines, Magistrate, to the taking of further evidence in the case of *Rex v Mack* now being heard in H. M. Police Court, and after some rather sensational evidence had been heard, the further hearing was again adjourned. For the first time a witness for the prosecution was cross-examined by counsel for the defence.

The accused, Arthur Charles Mack, 52, merchant, stands charged on six separate and distinct counts with participating, in conjunction with others, in forgery, obtaining and attempting to obtain money by fraud, and counterfeiting, whereby the Chartered Bank of India, Australia & China Ltd., were defrauded of the sum of \$136,688.25.

Mr. John McNeill (of Messrs. Hansons) appeared to prosecute on behalf of the S.M.P., while the accused was represented by Mr. E. L. Hartopp.

Expert's Opinion

The first important witness called was Auguste Weder, who gave his occupation as "typewriter and calculating machine man," and, in answer to various questions gave it as his distinct and positive opinion that no two typewriting machines had the same characteristics, but that given a document, he could infallibly point out the particular machine on which the document was written, from out of a number of different machines. This witness identified certain cheques and letters as having been written on certain typewriting machines, one of which had been identified as having been taken from out of the office of Bush Mack & Co. Cross-examined by Mr. Hartopp for the defence: Are you really able to say whether or not those various documents which have been presented to you by counsel for the police, were or were not produced on one or other of those machines without making a test in Court, and comparing it here and now with specimen of typewriting from one of those machines taken for the purpose?.....Yes, it is possible.

Witness further stated that he had examined thousands of machines, and it was not possible for an expert to make a mistake after he had made a careful examination of the machine with the typed specimen. Mr. Hartopp tried hard to shake this witness' evidence, but he adhered to the position he originally took up.

Police Evidence

Reginald William Yorke, Superintendent in the S.M.P., was then called by the prosecution, and gave evidence as to alleged interviews which the accused gave to him, and to various statements said to have been made at such appointments. To the admission of this evidence Mr. Hartopp, strenuously objected, but in the end it was decided by the Magistrate that, although it was admitted that Mack had at no time been cautioned that anything he said might be used in evidence against him, yet, in the absence of any "suspicion" that the police intended to make an arrest in the accused's case, he, the Magistrate, would admit such evidence, leaving it to the higher court to take further action if necessary, in the meantime registering counsel's protest.

Witness stated that he first saw the accused in his office on January 19, when he wished to "see Mr. Mack in view of a document which I had seen at the Central police station, the document in question being a specimen signature card on the China State bank because Mack's signature was on it, introduced by the China Leaf Co., and I was making enquiries about such an a/c. On that occasion I saw a young Italian citizen, named Tamburini, who was immediately sent off by Mack, after he had handed to him a letter file, and told to come back after lunch. Mack took the file, and said: 'I'll show you how I came to sign that card, and he then told me that about January 5 last a foreign male came to his office, and gave the name of Camincian, who looked like a Greek or a Turk, and stated that he wished to obtain samples of leaf tobacco and quotations. The name given was G. S. Camincian & Co., of 19 Museum Road. He showed me a carbon copy of a letter which he had written to the L. B. Jenkins Tobacco Co. of 72 Szechuan Road, asking them on behalf of Camincian & Co., to quote for tobacco, and also, the reply received declining to do so. Mack then told me that he again saw Camincian a few days later, and was asked by him to introduce him to the China State bank for the purpose of opening an account and before he agreed to do so, Mack stated, he saw his legal adviser as to any responsibility he might incur by such an introduction. Mack had never known Camincian before the January 5.

Loans To Ionin.

"I then mentioned to Mack," continued the Superintendent, "that I was making enquiries as to a number of cheques which had been signed by one P. Sokoloff, drawn on the China State Bank, which were in the hands of the police, and Mack then told me that on the 4th a Russian, named Ionin, had given him several post-dated cheques signed by P. Sokoloff, and explained the reason by saying that Ionin had during the past two or

three years obtained from him or his firm of Bush Mack & Co., sums of money totalling \$78,000, and his firm's affairs were affected by these loans to such an extent that he had told Ionin that he was going to close his firm and that any investigation of the firm's books would mean trouble for Ionin. In consequence of that talk with Ionin, the latter told Mack to draw up a list of his most pressing debts, which he did, and, subsequently on January 4, Ionin brought cheques for the amount of the most pressing creditor's debts, such cheques being signed with the name of P. Sokoloff.

One Million Dollars

"When I saw Mack the next day, Mack commenced to talk about the arrest of Ionin, and asked me, as representing the police, not to spoil his (Mack's) chance of getting his \$78,000 back from Ionin, and Mack told me that he knew that Ionin had a sum of just over \$1,000,000 in the Chartered bank in the name of Scuratoff, and that he (Mack) believed he would obtain his \$78,000 which Ionin owed both him and his firm.

"I pooh-poohed this statement of one million dollars, but told Mack I would make enquiries. I did so next day, and saw both Mr. Roberts and Mr. Sykes of the Chartered Bank, and from them learnt that not only was there no such sum as one million dollars but that there was no such account as Scuratoff. When I told Mack that information, he was very hard to convince, and for a considerable time he was trying to explain to me the origin of this huge sum of money standing to the credit of Scuratoff. The amount was originally in gold dollars, the banks in Shanghai and Manila through which this money had passed, and he showed me consular letters verifying the signature of Scuratoff. Realising eventually that there was no money in the Chartered Bank, he commenced to again criticise Ionin for swindling etc., and Mack then said: 'If you are convinced that there is no money in the Chartered Bank, I'll tell you a good deal more about that cheque,' which remark I understood to refer to the cheques signed by Sokoloff, and he then told me that the cheques came from the China State Bank and that they were drawn on the account of the China Leaf Tobacco Co."

At this stage the further hearing was adjourned to January 20 at 10 a.m., when the police witness will continue his evidence.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

S. 1, Special Branch, D-xxxx

REPORT

Date December 14, 1933

Subject (in full) Departure of Skuratoff for France with passport

issued by the Bureau of Public Safety

Made by Supt. Tan Shao-liang Forwarded by

With reference to the endorsement of the Officer i/c Special Branch on attached report, I had an interview with Dr. Hung Chi, Chief of the 2nd Department at the Bureau of Public Safety on the afternoon of December 13 and after briefly relating the circumstances under which S.S. Skuratoff obtained a passport from the Bureau of Public Safety to enable him to proceed to France, I advised him that in future if the Passport Office has any doubt about persons applying for the issue of passports, they should communicate with the Officer i/c Special Branch and the information desired would be furnished. Dr. Hung appreciated this advice and agreed to instruct his subordinates to do accordingly.

Dr. Hung informed me confidentially that the Council of United Russian Public Organizations at Shanghai has been registered with the Social Bureau and the Kuomintang Headquarters and has always been looked upon as a responsible organization with reference to certificates to Russian applicants for registration.

Tan Shao-liang
Superintendent

Officer i/c Special Branch.

File No. 2

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE

File No. B. RUGI

No. D

Section 2, Special Branch

REPORT

Date December 11, 1933

Subject (in full) Alleged arrest by local Chinese Military Authorities of a Russian named Skuratoff, on suspicion of espionage.

Made by D.S.I. Prokofiev

Forwarded by 99

Sverd

With reference to the endorsement of the Officer i/c

Special Branch on the attached report dated December 5, 1933, on the subject of the alleged arrest by the local Chinese Military Authorities of a Russian named Skuratoff suspected of being engaged in espionage (File D-5464), I have to report that the younger of

*Supp. Jan,
Please
tell these
facts to the
Ch. authority
and explain
that they
will be
well informed
if Ch. Govt
is in any
trouble with
the Foreign
countries
concerned
if they issue
passports
to Skuratoff
It would
be advisable
for the V.S.B.
to furnish us
of the name
of the two
men. This
advice should
be given very
discreetly
as the matter
is beyond
our purview*

the two men bearing the name S. S. Skuratoff mentioned in the previous report had no documents of identity when registering with the Council of United Russian Public Organizations (SORO), 442 Avenue Joffre. Therefore he was registered with that body on the strength of a statement in writing made by two other persons to the effect that they guaranty the identity of Skuratoff and the correctness of particulars recorded on his registration card (Appendix A). He then was issued with a certificate of registration (Appendix B) on the strength of which as well as of a letter from the Council to the Public Safety Bureau (Appendix C) he was issued by the Bureau with a certificate of registration. The latter document was exchanged by Skuratoff on February 15, 1933, for a passport to enable him to proceed to France.

It would be natural to presume that the two persons who acted as Skuratoff's guarantors were registered with the Council of United Public Organizations and well known to that body.

However, no information can be obtained from the Council as to the identity of the guarantors. Three persons bearing the name (the name of the first guarantor) Shmulevsky have been located in Shanghai. They deny having any knowledge of Skuratoff. The signature of the Second guarantor is illegible.

1933 No further information is available regarding the other man named Skuratoff, whose photograph is also attached herewith. (Appendix D).

A. Prokofiev

Officer i/c Special Branch.

D. S. I.

No

Фамилія *Чистові*

Имя *София Семёновна*

Окна

Время рождения 1894, 5 Февраля

Мѣсто рождения г. Рига

Семейное положение жена

Имя и возрастъ жены

Имена и возрастъ дѣтей

Профессия Комиссарата

Когда и откуда прибылъ из Харбина

20000 Mixay 20/X-32000

Адресъ Inter-Savings Agts. 279.

ОТМЕТКИ

о произошедшемъ измѣненіяхъ въ семейномъ положеніи и о перемѣнѣ местожительства.

За поганою відповідь на
звернення на оборону ско-
їлося засудження. Схудніше
поганою відповідь на

W.H. Shumard

F. E. G. L.



APPENDIX "B"

File No. 76/747.

Council of United Russian Public Organizations
at Shanghai.

November 28, 1933.

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION.

This is to certify that Mr. S. S. Skuratoff, a Russian citizen and emigrant, bachelor, born in Samara Province (Russia) on the 5th of February, 1894 is duly registered with this council as a Russian emigrant.

Mr. S. S. Skuratoff arrived in Shanghai from Harbin via Yingkow on the 20.11.1932 and took up his residence at 421 Avenue du Roi Albert, Inter-Savings Apartments.

P/p/ Chairman

(Signed) M. I. Afanassieff

Secretary i/c

APPENDIX "C"

File 77/748

November 28, 1933.

Messrs. Bureau of Public Safety,
City Government of Greater Shanghai.

NANTAO

Dear Sir,

I have much pleasure in recommending to your kind attention the bearer of this Mr. S.S. Skuratoff, a Russian citizen and emigrant duly registered by this community.

Mr. Skuratoff arrived from Harbin without any documents on the 20/11/1932 and is desirous at present time to be registered at your Bureau and to receive a due certificate of registration.

Mr. Skuratoff is known to the community as a quite reliable and lawful person.

Therefore, I should be very obliged if you would kindly grant Mr. Skuratoff a necessary registration and issue him the due certificate.

Yours faithfully,

N. G. Yomin,

President.

APPENDIX "D"



3.3. SKURATOFF

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

REPORT

S.2, Special Branch

No. D 5111A

Date December 5, 1933.

Subject (in full) Alleged arrest by local Chinese Military Authorities of a Russian named Skuratoff on suspicion of espionage.

Made by D.S.I. Prokofiev Forwarded by D.G. Bureau

With reference to the attached cutting from the "Shanghai Times" of November 16, 1933, containing report on the subject of the alleged arrest by the local Chinese Military Authorities of a Russian named Skuratoff suspected of being engaged in espionage in China, Superintendent Tan Shao-liang states that upon enquiries made by him at the proper quarters he was informed that no such arrest had been made by the local Chinese Authorities.

Enquiries show that two Russians bearing the above name are registered with the "Council of United Russian Public Organizations at Shanghai" (SORO), No. 442 Avenue Joffre. When registering they gave the following particulars :-

1. Sergey Sergeievitch Skuratoff, born 5-2-1894 at Samara,

Russia. Bachelor. Merchant by occupation. Arrived in Shanghai from Harbin via Yingkow on 20-11-32. Resides at the Intersaving Apartments 272.

2. Sergey Sergeievitch Skuratoff, born 20-10-1867 at Perm,

Russia. Widower. Merchant by occupation. Arrived in Shanghai from Harbin on 29-4-32. Resides at No. 157-A Seward Road.

On February 15, 1933, the first named individual obtained from the Shanghai Bureau of Public Safety a passport to enable him to proceed to France "via British and French ports". On that occasion he gave his address as 491 Avenue du Roi Albert and stated that he was employed with Marden & Co. From enquiries made it was ascertained that there is no such address as "No. 491 Avenue du Roi Albert" and that no Russian named Skuratoff had been employed with Marden & Co. Ltd., No. 10 Hankow Road.

The "Shanghai Times" report above referred to was reprinted by the local Russian newspapers on November 17. However, no

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

Station,

REPORT

Date 19

Subject (in full) (2)

Made by Forwarded by

information has been so far received by either the Council of the United Russian Public Organizations or the Russian Emigrants Committee to the effect that any of local Russian residents bearing the above or a similar name has been missing.

It is of interest to note the following notice appeared in the North China Daily News of September 12, 1933 :-

"Mr. S.S. Skuratoff, formerly of California, U.S.A., is requested to communicate with the undersigned.

Musso, Fisher & Wilhelm,
71 Szechuen Road."

In an interview with the undersigned Dr. Wilhelm stated that a similar notice was published by him in the same newspaper on 4-4-1933. On both occasions he acted on instructions of a client who gave her name as Mrs. O.M. Skuratoff and her address as 12 Harmony Terrace. Without entering in details Dr. Wilhelm explained that the idea of his client was to induce Mr. S.S. Skuratoff to call at his office in order to get hold of him in connection with a certain monetary transaction. Skuratoff, however, failed to put up in an appearance, or to communicate with the above law firm. As the whole affair seemed to Dr. Wilhelm rather strange, he refused to deal with the matter any longer.

*82
Ref. A.
did the
P.S. Bureau
make any
inquiries
before issuing
the notice?
Who acted
as agent
for S.S.
Skuratoff?
J.W.
D.S.I.
1933*

Enquiries at No.12 Harmony Terrace, Avenue Joffre, which is a boarding house, show that no one bearing the name of Mrs Skuratoff resided at this address.

Enquiries have failed to locate any person named Skuratoff as well as to confirm the report of the "Shanghai Times".

C. Prokofiev

D. S. I.

Officer i/c Special Branch.

NOTICE

MR. S. S. SKURATOFF, formerly
of California, U.S.A., is request-
ed to communicate with the under-
signed.

MUSSO, FISCHER & WILHELM
71 Szechuen Road. x8645

THE SHANGHAI TIMES, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1933

ALLEGED SPY HELD AT GARRISON HERE

An alleged Russian named Skuratoff is now imprisoned at the Shanghai-Woosung Garrison Headquarters at Lunghwa, on suspicion of espionage in China, according to a Chinese report yesterday. The Military Court of the headquarters is investigating as to what country he had represented in the course of his activities.

11/16/33

\$2, For inquiry and
report please. Supp. Jan
may be able to help.
W.W.

D. Prokopoff
17/11/33